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**MAR 09 2006**

Date : March 9, 2006

Pages (including cover) : 4

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**Message :** Re: Our Docket No. 59651 (49321)  
U.S. Serial No. 10/630,470

Please enter the attached response.

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Docket No. 59651 (49321)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: K. Matsuyama et al.

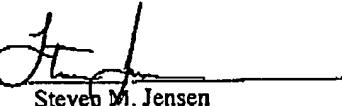
U.S. SERIAL NO.: 10/630,470 GROUP: 2854

FILED: July 29, 2003 EXAMINER: A. Nguyen

FOR: IMAGE FORMING APPARATUS

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

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By:   
Steven M. Jensen

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Applicants are in receipt of the Office Action dated January 10, 2006 of the above-referenced application. Applicants respond to the Office Action as follows.

Claims 1-10 are pending in the application.

As recited in independent claims 1 and 10, Applicants' claimed invention is directed to an image forming apparatus including a sheet eject mechanism that holds a sheet therein at an initial position, and moves "from the initial position to the sorting position with a sheet held therein" (claim 1, emphasis added). After ejecting the sheet at the sorting position, the sheet eject mechanism returns from the sorting position to the initial position without a sheet held therein.